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6 October 1958

Discrepancies in Soviet Handbook on Foreign Trade

REF : Soviet Foreign Trade in 1956, Statistical Survey, Moscow, 1958, U.

BACKGROUND

Two outstanding discrepancies have been revealed in a study of the statistics published in the referenced source:

There is an unexplained residue forming the difference between the sum of total exports to individual countries and the published figure for total USSR exports. These discrepancies amount to 373 million rubles (\$93 million) in 1955 and 667 million rubles (\$167 million) in 1956. Exports to countries not specified in the geographic breakdown may account for as much as 10 percent of the residues; however, the striking similarity of these residues to Soviet gold sales (\$70 million in 1955 and \$150 million in 1956) suggests that Soviet gold sales in 1955 and 1956 may be hidden in Soviet export figures in these years.

In addition, there is a large residue revealed in comparing the sum of the total exports to individual countries with the sum of the categorized commodities in the table of all Soviet exports. In 1955 the residue is 2,630 million rubles (\$658 million) and in 1956 the residue amounts to 2,200 million rubles (\$551 million). The bulk of the export residues appears in Soviet exports to Bloc countries. It is believed that the major portion of these residues represents arms sales to other Bloc members.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Can the gold hypothesis be confirmed or can any other explanation be given for the unexplained residues mentioned in the first paragraph?
2. Can any other explanation be given for the large export residues mentioned in the second paragraph?

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ORR/S/TF/1j/x2327 (6 October 1958)

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